

**Sulphur District Four
Community Advisory Panel
Meeting Minutes November 20, 2007**

CAP members present: Nancy Tower, Susan Settoon Richards, Harvey Keefer, Randy Broussard, Marc Daigle, Steve Rheas, Beverly Castleberry, Ron Phelps.

Guests: Drenda Grubb, Janie Broussard, Tom Trahan and Brian Harrell.

Harvey Keefer opened the meeting with prayer, followed by introductions of participants.

Lauren Harrell, local architect intern and historic preservation planner, provided a presentation on the Economics of Historic Preservation. Her presentation is attached.

Harrell began her presentation with the statement, "Historic Preservation is part of giving citizens a sense-of-place and a reason for others to visit." She went on to say that, "No one is going to visit your city to shop at the local big-box store, they have those in their own cities. They will come for authenticity, specialties and surroundings." She cited multiple economic benefits to historic preservation efforts, which included: Heritage Tourism, Use of Existing Resources, Community Based Economy and Property Value Increases.

In the presentation she also noted that there are three basic tools for encouraging historic preservation. The first is education, the second is citizen consensus for creating a plan and path forward and the third is public policy. The rest of her presentation focused mainly on the public policy aspect due to the interest of the CAP members and Council Member Nancy Tower.

In the category of public policy, she noted that a comprehensive plan is probably the most important tool and it is certainly the beginning. According to Harrell, "We've all heard that if you fail to plan, you can plan to fail, and that is true. Every city considering historic preservation, needs a comprehensive plan." Next, Harrell says that the City should pass a Historic Preservation Ordinance. Such an ordinance is designed to protect the authenticity and character of historic areas and buildings, provide design guidelines tailored for particular districts, offers guidelines to developers and works with the building codes and zoning ordinances to match what should be done with what the law requires. "Some towns and cities work their preservation ordinances into their zoning ordinances by having overlay districts. These districts have certain allowances and other restrictions, which are necessary to have consistency in one area, but would not be helpful in another area," said Harrell.

Following her presentation, CAP members discussed opportunities to continue to share this information with a broader audience and encourage city leaders to seek citizen consensus for a historic preservation plan for the Sulphur.

The December meeting of the CAP will be Christmas Social at Nancy Tower's house from 5 – 8 (open house style). Nancy will provide the taco soup and fixings, CAP members are asked to bring desserts.

In January we will continue to discuss economic development and get updates on some of the drainage improvement plans that are taking place in the district.

Submitted by Nancy Tower